

MAURICE ALLAIS PRIZE IN ECONOMIC SCIENCE

Rules governing the Prize

The Maurice Allais Foundation, under the aegis of the ParisTech Foundation, registered as a public service organization, has decided to establish a Maurice Allais Prize in Economic Science.

Beyond the purpose to honor and perpetuate the memory of one of the greatest names in French economic thought, 1988 Nobel Laureate in Economic Sciences, the Foundation aims at encouraging prolongation of his work by bringing help to orienting and promoting economic research in the direction shown and followed by Maurice Allais during his entire life: Using a truly scientific approach to the analysis of economic problems and rejecting any explanation which would rest on ideological thoughts or conceptual prejudices, whichever they might be.

THE FIELD OF RESEARCH WHICH THE PRIZE WANTS TO PROMOTE

Maurice Allais has synthesized in several of his talks the main traits of the methodology he applied for his own part and which often led him to go off the beaten paths and to confront the dominating ideas of his time. This method is nothing else than the one which scientists make use of in scientific research in general, but which is sometimes underappreciated in specific avenues of research in the social sciences, while Maurice Allais has granted to it lifelong highest importance. The jury will consequently prioritize scientific works entailing:

- A scrupulous and careful analysis of empirical facts in their different dimensions, both temporal (periods) as well as spatial (countries), without any preconceived view ;
- A review of existing theories and of their ineffectiveness in explaining facts and observed behaviors;
- A construction of the theoretical model making clearly explicit its assumptions, their implications and their plausibility in view of observed facts;
- A comparison of the results derived from the model with past data, with particular attention to the validity of these results in time and space ;
- When meaningful, a confrontation in a rigorous framework of methods and models derived from disciplines neighboring economics to the ones of economics as strictly defined.
- Works bearing on the general domains of Maurice Allais' writings will be particularly taken into consideration.

Professor Allais has made extensive use of mathematics in his researches but he never regarded it as a prominent trait of his works. Mathematics was to him a tool, and only a tool, allowing to express concepts under a general form and to derive all logical consequences. The Foundation will pursue in this direction and will reject any formalization, which would not rest on a firm empirical background.

Similarly, Maurice Allais has made extensive use of statistical tools but always declared as “wild econometrics” the automatic application of tests and processes, the only justifications of which were to be easily accessible for computerized treatment and to be of current use. Quite to the contrary, he kept very watchful of the conditions under which the different methods could be meaningfully used and never was fooled by representations, the economic justifications for which were either insufficiently grounded or opposite to common intuition. Clearly, the Foundation will bring an alert attention to this aspect of the submitted economic research.

On the other hand, Maurice Allais has always shown a great interest for all deeply pursued empirical or experimental researches which would aim at evidencing “real” individual or group behaviors when making their economic decisions, for this kind of work can foster progress of our understanding of the present world and constitute a basis of true advances, even if all theoretical consequences may still not be derived. As a matter of fact, he can be considered as being a precursor in these methodologies which tend nowadays to develop as, already in 1952, on the basis of sampled questionnaires, he was in a situation to show a clear-cut formal contradiction between real individual behavior under uncertainty and the presuppositions of currently admitted theories. The Foundation will be quite open to serious researches of this type, which could be submitted to its attention.

Within the field of research as defined here above, the Maurice Allais Prize will be awarded in consideration of the scientific value of the submitted research.

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PRIZE

The Maurice Allais Prize will exhibit the following characteristics:

- **Periodicity:**

The Prize will be awarded every second year on the anniversary day of Maurice Allais’ birth, i.e. May 31, or around that anniversary date. The deadline for submitting candidates’ works will be January 31 of the corresponding year.

- **Form of the Prize:**

The Maurice Allais Prize will select the best research work in Economic Science meeting the general criteria enumerated above and every author of which will meet the eligibility conditions to be a candidate to the Prize.

- **Eligibility of candidates:**

Applicants can be any person being either a French citizen or a citizen of any of the member states of the European Union or a citizen of any member state being part to the European Economic Area Agreement, or a citizen of Switzerland, or be in a position to establish having been a fiscal resident in the last five years at least of any of the European Union member states, or of any other state being part to the European Economic Area Agreement, or of Switzerland. Applicants will write a letter of intent explaining the reasons why they wish to compete for the Maurice Allais Prize.

Works submitted may take the form of a book, excluding textbooks, or of an article published during the last past ten years or during the current year, or not yet published but officially accepted in a journal or in the series of a major internationally recognized research institution. Except if the Jury rules differently on special grounds, the work should comprise at least 20 000 signs. Writings in French or in English will be accepted, under condition in the latter case of being endowed with an extended summary in French language.

A book or an article already submitted to a preceding session in view of the Maurice Allais Prize may not be submitted anew, but the author may be again a candidate to the Prize if submitting a different piece of research, distinct from the one previously submitted.

In case of a co-authored work or article, the Prize may only be awarded to all of the co-authors and is then equally shared by the latter. This implies that each of the co-authors meets the eligibility conditions to the prize. A submission file may be presented by one of the co-authors, who should then provide evidence that his (her) co-authors meet all the eligibility conditions.

- **Jury:**

The Jury of the Prize will be the Scientific Committee in Economic Science of the Maurice Allais Foundation, which assembles well recognized individuals from higher education and research, active or retired, selected in due respect to their competence and to their acceptance of the scientific ideal which motivated Maurice Allais's works, particular precedence being given to those who had the chance and the honor to be acquainted with Maurice Allais and who supported his efforts.

In case of a large number of submissions, the President of the Jury may, exceptionally, have recourse to external advice, but the Jury remains fully and solely responsible for the decision.

One or several of the members of the Foundation Committee designated by the latter, will assume the Prize secretariat.

- **Endowment:**

The Prize will be endowed by the Maurice Allais Foundation, with the contribution of donors who would like to show their interest for the type of works, which the Foundation wants to promote, as well as with contributions of the Ministry for Higher Education and Research or of other public authorities.

The total amount of the said endowment has been fixed at 20,000 Euros

Beyond the Prize Laureate (or Laureates, in case of a cosigned book or article), the Jury may decide to designate another candidate (or other candidates in case of a cosigned book or article) as being “nominee(s)” in view of the quality of the submitted work. In such a case, the amount of the Prize awarded to the Laureate(s) is of 15,000 Euros and an amount of 5,000 Euros is awarded to the nominee(s). If the Jury does not designate “nominee(s)”, the amount of the Prize awarded to the Laureate(s) is of 20,000 Euros.

The donors who will have brought their financial help to the Prize will be associated to the award ceremony.

In accepting the Prize, laureates commit to participate as much as possible to the actions of communication and awareness heightening aimed at promoting the Maurice Allais’ Prize, in particular by making mention of their award in their public talks. They commit at the same time to favor and help research undertaken in the Maurice Allais’ spirit as protractions of his scientific contributions.